



# Los Lunas Transportation Center / Station Area

## Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation Report



November 2015

Prepared by:

sites  
southwest



Small Community • Big Possibilities



## RESOLUTION NO. 15-22

**A RESOLUTION OF THE VILLAGE OF LOS LUNAS MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS PURSUANT TO THE METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT CODE, DECLARING THE LOS LUNAS TRANSPORTATION CENTER/STATION AREA TO BE SUFFERING FROM SLUM AND BLIGHT, AND DESIGNATING THE “LOS LUNAS TRANSPORTATION CENTER/STATION METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA.”**

**WHEREAS**, the State of New Mexico has adopted 3-60A-1 to 3-60A-48 NMSA 1978, the “Metropolitan Redevelopment Code”, which grants municipalities certain powers; and, and

**WHEREAS**, the Village of Los Lunas (the “Village”) and its consultants have engaged in a study of slum and blighted conditions within the Los Lunas Transportation Center/Station Area (bounded by Juan Perea Road, Courthouse Road, Village Drive, Los Lentes Road, Lunas Hill Avenue, and properties on the south side of Huning Street), and have submitted their findings and recommendations concerning the proposed Los Lunas Transportation Center/Station Metropolitan Redevelopment Area to the Village Council (the “Council”), which findings and recommendations are set forth in the Los Lunas Transportation Center/Station Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation Report (the “MRA Designation Report”); and

**WHEREAS**, Pursuant to Section 8 of the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code, the Village has caused to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the proposed Metropolitan Redevelopment Area, a notice containing a general description of the area and the date, time, and place where the Council will hold a public hearing to consider the adoption of a this resolution and announcing that any interested party may appear and speak to the issue of the adoption of this resolution. The Village has also caused to be mailed a notice of this hearing to all property owners in the proposed Metropolitan Redevelopment Area; and

**WHEREAS**, The Council met on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2015 at the time and place designated in the notice, to hear and consider all comments of all interested parties in the issue of the adoption of this resolution; and

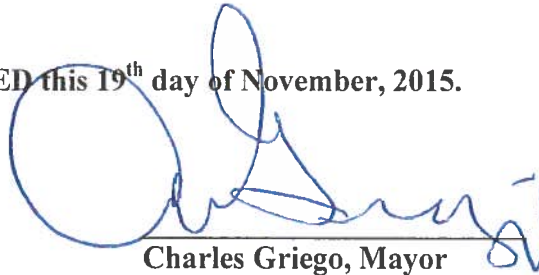
**WHEREAS,** The Council has considered the findings and determinations set forth in MRA Designation Report and all comments made at the public hearing concerning the conditions which exist in the Los Lunas Transportation Center/Station Metropolitan Redevelopment Area, identified in the MRA Designation Report.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** by the governing body of the Village of Los Lunas, New Mexico, that:

Section 1. The Council hereby finds and determines that the Los Lunas Transportation Center Redevelopment Area, as described above and identified in the MRA Designation Report, is an area, by reason of the presence of a substantial number of deteriorated and deteriorating structures, unsafe conditions, deterioration of site and other improvements, lack of adequate housing facilities, obsolete and impractical planning and platting, low levels of commercial and industrial activity and redevelopment which substantially impair and arrests the sound growth and economic health and well-being of the Village and the Los Lunas Transportation Center/Station Metropolitan Redevelopment Area, constitutes an economic and social burden, is a menace to the public health, safety and welfare in its present condition and use, is a blighted area and is appropriate for one or more Metropolitan Redevelopment Projects.

Section 2. The Council hereby finds that the rehabilitation, conservation, development and redevelopment of and in the Los Lunas Transportation Center/Station Metropolitan Redevelopment Area is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the Village.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADPOTED** this 19<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2015.



Charles Griego, Mayor

**ATTEST:**



Gregory D. Martin, Village Administrator

This report was prepared under contract to the Village of Los Lunas, New Mexico  
Project consultant was Sites Southwest, Ltd. Co.

November 2015

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# 1. Introduction

The Village of Los Lunas has identified properties primarily to the south and east of the Los Lunas Transportation Center as a Village Center and key component of the Village's economic development strategy, to be redeveloped with commercial, residential and public uses that support transit-oriented development, walking and bicycling. Policies in plans ranging from the 2008 *Los Lunas Rail Runner Express Station Area Plan* to the 2013 Comprehensive Plan and *Los Lunas Transportation Center Master Plan II* support this vision. In spite of the public investment and policy support for development of this area, private investment has not occurred in the past seven years although there has been significant new development elsewhere in the Village.

The purpose of this report is to determine what is preventing private investment in this area and how the Village might promote its vision. This report evaluates approximately 46 acres primarily to the south and east of the Los Lunas Transportation Center for potential designation as a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA).

The State of New Mexico has a number of statutes that are intended to help municipalities in New Mexico promote economic development and redevelopment in areas where such activity is inhibited by a variety of factors. The Urban Development Law (§3-46-1 to §3-46-45 NMSA 1978), the Community Development Law (§3-60-1 to §3-60-37 NMSA 1978), and the New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Code (§3-60A-1 to §3-60A-48 NMSA 1978) enable municipalities to implement strategies and projects to eliminate blight. Because the Urban Development Law and the Community Development Law are closely associated with specific Federal renewal programs, the preferred approach for Los Lunas to accomplish its goals for the Village Center is through the powers conferred by the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code.

The New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Code (§3-60A-1 to 3-60A-48 NMSA 1978) provides cities in New Mexico with the powers to correct conditions in areas or neighborhoods within municipalities which "substantially impair or arrest the sound and orderly development" within the municipality. These powers can help reverse an area's decline and stagnation; however, the municipality may only use these powers within designated Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas.

Designation of an MRA is based on findings of "slum or blight" conditions, as defined in the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code (§3-60S-8). The criteria set by the Code for a "blighted" area include physical conditions and economic conditions.

As defined in the Code,

*"Blighted area" means an area within the area of operation other than a slum area that, because of the presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures, predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements, diversity of ownership, tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land, defective or unusual conditions of title, improper subdivision or lack of adequate housing facilities in the area or obsolete or impractical planning and platting or an area where a significant number of commercial or mercantile businesses have closed or significantly reduced their operations due to the economic losses or loss of profit due to operating in the area, low levels of commercial or industrial activity or redevelopment or any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth and economic health and well-being of a municipality or locale within a municipality or an area that retards the provisions of housing accommodations or constitutes an economic or social burden and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals or welfare in its present condition and use;*

## 1.1 ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Under the goal of creating a town center in the Village of Los Lunas (Future Land Use Goal 1.2), the 2013 Comprehensive Plan continues to encourage transit-oriented development around the Transportation Center and calls for investigating the use of redevelopment tools to support redevelopment of a designated area for a town center.

The analysis contained in this report shows that the following conditions have inhibited new development and redevelopment in the Study Area and substantially impaired the sound growth of the Village Center and economic health and well-being of the Village as a whole.

### Unsanitary or unsafe conditions

All of the study area is located within a FEMA-designated floodplain. Mitigation of this potentially hazardous condition renders redevelopment more expensive than development outside the floodplain. A 23-acre site of a former mobile home park is essentially abandoned and considered to be a nuisance. Its sheltered location draws homeless persons and illegal activities. In addition, the public facilities in the area have deteriorated.

### Deterioration of site or other improvements

Sidewalks, streets and fences within the 23-acre abandoned mobile home site are cracked, invaded by weeds and sagging or falling down. Streetlights are damaged and vandals steal copper and other items from the site.

### Obsolete or impractical planning and platting

The existing planning and platting for the former mobile home park and adjacent large vacant parcels, which lack internal street access, do not foster the development of the higher density housing,

commercial and public activities envisioned in policies for transit-oriented development around the Transportation Center.

## Diversity of ownership

Seven different property owners, including two local governments, make it difficult to carry out coordinated redevelopment of the town center envisioned in the Village's planning documents. For example, the number of different owners of key properties makes it difficult to achieve logical, interconnected road and utility systems in the Study Area.

## Low levels of commercial or industrial activity or redevelopment

The establishment of the Transportation Center along NM 314 and growing ridership has not been sufficient to create the desirable level of commercial and residential development and redevelopment in the Study Area, due to the issues noted previously.

# 1.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Los Lunas Transportation Center, with the investment in the Rail Runner and Rio Metro Transit, and the surrounding mostly vacant land, represents the most feasible location in the Village to develop a desirable Village Center with public uses and higher density commercial and residential uses that support transit-oriented development and redevelopment.

- The west side of the MRA Study Area has developed as a Transportation Center where residents and visitors can park their cars, walk or ride bicycles to board the Rail Runner Express to Albuquerque and parts north, as well as local buses. A day care center and two-story apartment buildings exist to the north of the back parking lot, and the Village intends to incorporate a plaza, a central park and performance venue, and retail space.
- Various physical conditions have inhibited the sound and orderly development of the Village Center in this location; primarily location in a floodplain, fragmented ownership of parcels, obsolete and impractical planning and platting (including an abandoned mobile home park with obsolete infrastructure and large parcels without legal roadway access), and deterioration of some structures.
- The current condition of a large proportion of the properties is a detriment to the Village's fiscal well-being and to the ability of the Village to meet the needs of its residents.

The analysis demonstrates that the property included in the analysis exhibits a combination of factors that contribute to blight. Because current conditions within the study area inhibit sound development of the property, the redevelopment and development of the study area is necessary in the interest of the welfare of the residents of the municipality.

The powers granted to municipalities in New Mexico through the Metropolitan Redevelopment Act are intended to enable municipalities to promote economic activity in areas like the Study Area, where

growth and development is hindered by physical and other conditions. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Act provides a number of tools to municipalities that help them eliminate conditions of blight in areas that are so designated, including the ability to acquire land, assist in land assembly, offer financial incentives and provide public improvements to encourage and promote industry, trade, or other economic activity.

Based on the findings of the designation report, a development/redevelopment plan should be carried out to aid in the elimination and deterrence of blight.

## 1.3 BOUNDARIES OF THE STUDY AREA

The Study Area consists of approximately 54 acres. Most of the area is south of Courthouse Road and east of NM 314. The portion owned and occupied by Valencia County is north of Courthouse Road. The portion of the Study Area mostly south of Courthouse Road is as follows:

Beginning at the southeast corner of the Land of Pedro Tafoya, Lot A2 (Parcel 2), where it intersects with Courthouse Road, then

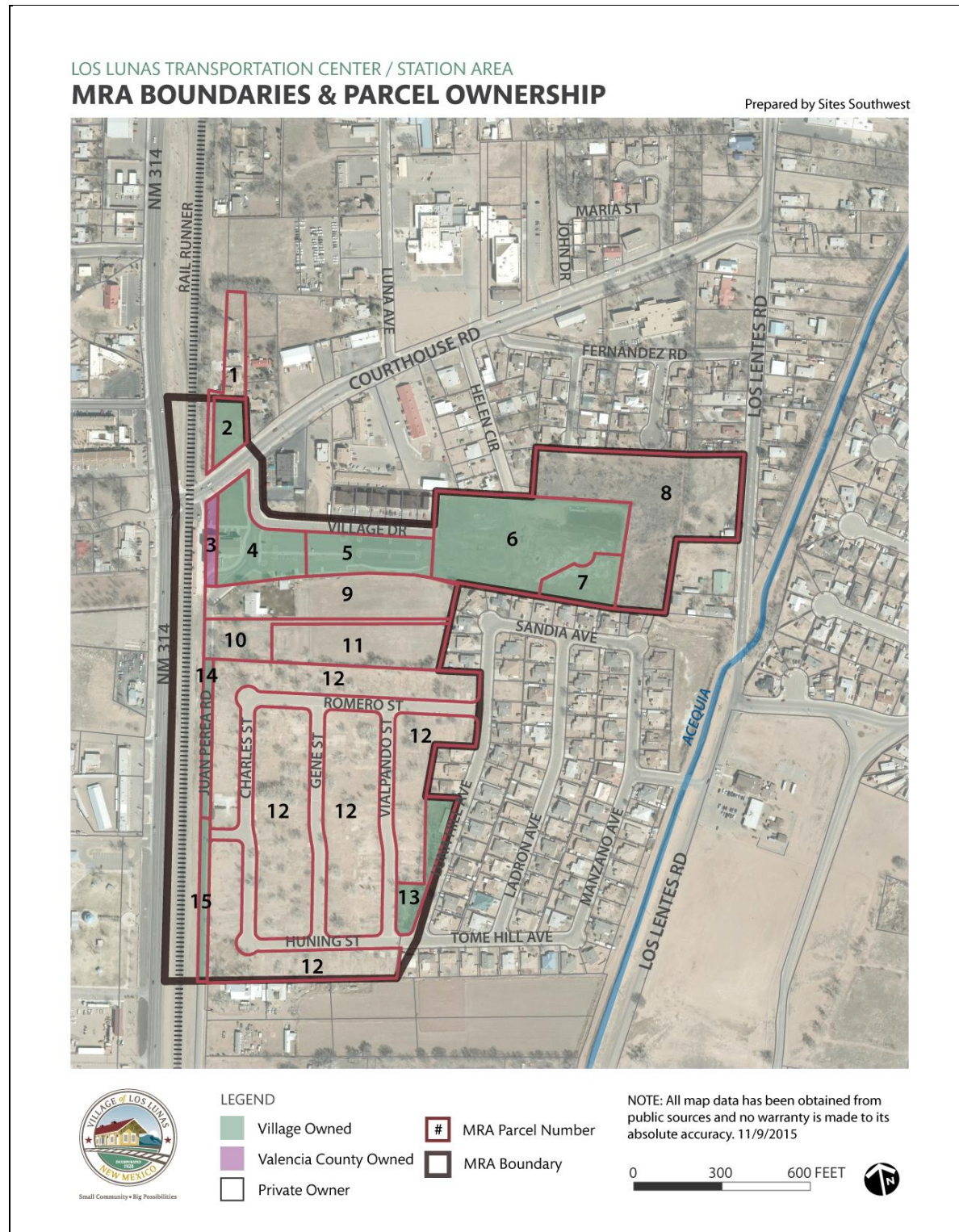
- North along the eastern boundary of Land of Pedro Tafoya, Lot A2 (Parcel 2), then
- West along the northern boundary of (Land of Pedro Tafoya, Lot A2 (Parcel 2), then
- South along the eastern right-of-way of NM 314 to the southern boundary of Village Plaza Subdivision, Lot: All Blocks: A thru E, 22.96 acres, Maps 73 & 75 TRS 3B, 3A, 3E1, 3E2, 3E3, & 3E4C 1993 Rev. (Mobile Home Park ) (Parcel 12), hereafter referred to as Village Plaza Subd.,
- East along the southern boundary of Village Plaza Subd. (Parcel 12) to Luna Hill Rd,
- North along the western right-of-way of Luna Hill Rd to the northeast corner of Mountain View Subd., Block 4, Drainage easement (Parcel 13),
- West along Mountain View Subd., Block 4, Drainage easement (Parcel 13), then
- North along the eastern boundary of Village Plaza Subd. (Parcel 12), then
- West along the northeastern boundary of Village Plaza Subd. (Parcel 12), to Luna Hill Rd, then
- North along the western right-of-way of Luna Hill Rd, then
- West along the northeast corner of Village Plaza Subd. (Parcel 12), then
- North along the eastern boundaries of Land of Jesus & Francisco Gonzales TR B-2 (Parcel 11) and Tract A ( Parcel 9), then
- East along the southern boundaries of Land of g8A Limited Co., Tract C-1 (Parcel 6), C-2 (Parcel 7) and Map 73, TR 92A1 (Parcel 8), then
- North along the southeastern boundary of Map 73, TR 92A1 (Parcel 8), then
- East along the southern boundary of Map 73, TR 92A1 (Parcel 8), then
- North along the western right-of-way of Los Lentos Road, to the northeastern corner of Map 73, TR 92A1 (Parcel 8), then
- West along the northern boundary of Map 73, TR 92A1 (Parcel 8) to the northwest corner, then
- South along the westernmost boundary of Map 73, TR 92A1 (Parcel 8), then

- West along the northern boundary of Land of g8A Limited Co., Tract C-1 (Parcel 6), to the northwest corner, then
- South along the western boundary of Land of g8A Limited Co., Tract C-1 (Parcel 6) to Village Dr, SE, then
- West along the northern right-of-way of Village Dr, then
- North along the eastern right-of-way of Village Dr to Courthouse Rd., point of beginning.

**Table 1 Legal Lot Description and Size**

ID	Uniform Parcel Code	Site Address	Legal Description	Parcel Size (Ac)
1	1009038277140	112 Courthouse Rd, SE	Land of Pedro Tafoya, Lot A1 (only the access easement)	0.794
2	1009038277115	120 Courthouse Rd, SE	Land of Pedro Tafoya, Lot A2	0.551
3	1009038263070		Map 75, TR: 3E1A S: 33 T: 7N R: 2E 0.25 ac. Map 75	0.293
4	1009038290070		Land of g8A Limited Co. Tract A	1.814
5	1009038315055		Land of g8A Limited Co. Tract B	1.479
6	1009038372050		Land of g8A Limited Co., Tract C-1	4.557
7	1009038382033		Land of g8A Limited Co. Tract C2	0.885
8	1009038429059	711 Los Lentos Rd, SE	Map 73, TR 92A1, 5.17 ac	5.267
9	1009038300042		Land of Jesus & Francisco Gonzales TR A	2.985
10	1009038263031		Land of Jesus & Francisco Gonzales TR B-1	1.077
11	1009038305024		Land of Jesus & Francisco Gonzales TR B-2	2.141
12	1009037246499		Village Plaza Subdivision, Lot: All Blocks: A Thru E, 22.96 acres MAPS 73 & 75 TRS 3B, 3A, 3E1, 3E2, 3E3, & 3E4C 1993 Rev. (Mobile Home Park )	22.96
13	1009037322471		Mountain View Subdivision, Block 4, Drainage easement	0.822
14	1009037254514		Map 75, TR 3-E-2A, 0.25 ac.	0.25
15	1009037241495		Map 75, TR 3-E-1-A, 0.25 ac.	0.25
	<b>Total Acreage</b>			<b>46.125</b>

**FIGURE 1 LOS LUNAS TRANSPORTATION CENTER MRA STUDY AREA**



# 2. Existing Conditions Assessment

## 2.1 VILLAGE POLICY

Over the past 60 years the Village of Los Lunas has evolved from a small community of 1,000, depending primarily on farming for its economy into a bedroom community of 15,000 for many employees who commute to work in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. It could double in size to 30,000 residents or more by 2035, according to its most recent Comprehensive Plan.

Accompanying this growth has been an increase in traffic that causes severe congestion on its main commercial thoroughfares, NM Hwy 6 (Main Street) and NM Hwy 314. The location of the Railrunner Station and Transportation Center along Hwy 314 gave commuters an alternative to the car in traveling to their jobs and also offered the Village a potential alternative to its existing density of development and lack of a town center. With the *Los Lunas Rail Runner Express Station Area Plan*, adopted in 2008, the Village adopted the principles of Transit-Oriented Design (TOD) for the area surrounding the Transportation Center.

Transit-Oriented Design encourages a more compact, higher density, mixed residential and commercial development pattern around transit stations that promotes walking and bicycling and using transit in addition to driving. The Station Area Plan identified the area surrounding the Transportation Center as appropriate for more growth and higher density and established two mixed use TOD zoning districts in the area to maximize flexibility for landowners and developers. Since the rail line and station were established, the Village's park-and-ride facility has seen increasingly heavy use by commuters from throughout Valencia County. The Transportation Center building was also designed as a multi-use facility which hosts a variety of public and private events and training. Additional projects have supported alternative modes of transportation in the area, such as the off-street landscaped multi-use trail that was constructed along NM Hwy 314.

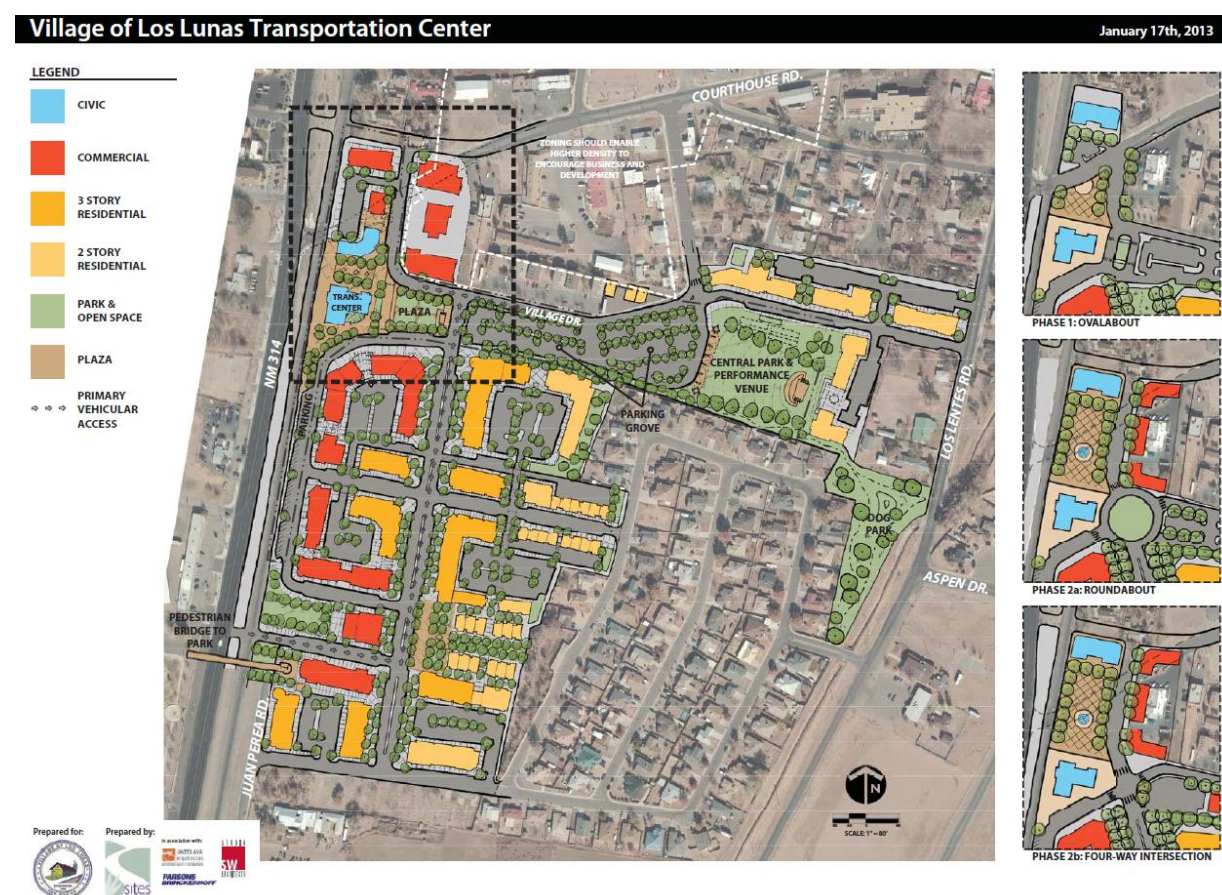
Under the goal of creating a town center in the Village (Future Land Use Goal 1.2), the 2013 Comprehensive Plan continues to encourage transit-oriented development around the Transportation Center and calls for investigating the use of redevelopment tools to support redevelopment of a designated area for a town center. Objectives also support continuing to implement public

improvements in the core of the Village that encourage bicycle and pedestrian traffic, improve the streetscape character and spur economic development compatible with pedestrian traffic.

This vision was advanced further by the Los Lunas Transportation Center Master Plan II adopted in 2013 (Figure 3). This plan incorporates a central park and performance venue on vacant land to the east of the station area's landscaped parking lot, flanked by higher density housing to the north and east, and a dog park to the south east. A smaller plaza would sit between the transportation center and parking lot, with additional commercial development and a public office building to the north. Retail spaces would be located closer to station area and public plaza.

The purpose of this study is to further the goals of the Village, consistent with adopted policy, by determining whether the designated area surrounding the Transportation Center meets the test for blight as defined in the Metropolitan Redevelopment Act. Establishing this location as a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area would give the Village the authority to help foster private sector redevelopment within it.

## FIGURE 2 VISION FOR LAND USE SURROUNDING THE LOS LUNAS TRANSPORTATION CENTER



The plan above (Figure 3) incorporates elements from both the Los Lunas Transportation Master Plan II and the Los Lunas Rail Runner Express Station Area Plan. Since these plans were completed, the Village

has been considering an option for a charter school to locate on land south of the Transportation Center, previously occupied by a mobile home park.

## 2.2 PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

The majority of the Study Area south of Courthouse Road consists of contiguous vacant land dominated by the Transportation Center and accompanying parking lots and walkways. The exception is a half-acre vacant lot along the railroad just north of Courthouse Road, which is owned by the Village. All of these parcels are within the floodplain.



*Front (l) and back views of the Transportation Center serving the Railrunner Express and Rio Metro.*



*(Above) Parcels 14 and 15 toward the northeast (l) and northwest (r). (Below) Back porch of a new manufactured home (L) and new mobile home (R) along 314 frontage road.*

There are a few residential structures in the Study Area, primarily sited along the 314 frontage road and occupied: a well-kept, blue, double-wide manufactured home with a back porch, gazebo and matching large shed or barn, and a fairly new single-wide trailer. The few remaining structures include an abandoned small mobile home and an old trailer. There is also an occupied single family dwelling located along Los Lentos Road in the southeast corner of Parcel 8.



*Back porch of manufactured home on parcel 15 (l) and new mobile home on parcel 14 (r).*

## Abandoned Mobile Home Park

The largest single parcel to the south is a 23-acre abandoned mobile home park which is accessed from the frontage road alone NM 314. The area has sidewalks, rolled curbs and paved streets, although these are cracked and invaded by weeds. Cement curb-cuts and the remnants of power and water hookups remain, but all the mobile homes are gone. Streetlights and fire hydrants are also present, although some have collapsed. The lots are full of rough dirt, weeds and debris. The site has remained vacant for at least seven years.



*Former sign for Monte Vista Mobile Home Park (l). The park's current condition (r).*

### *Land Uses Surrounding the Southern Study Area*

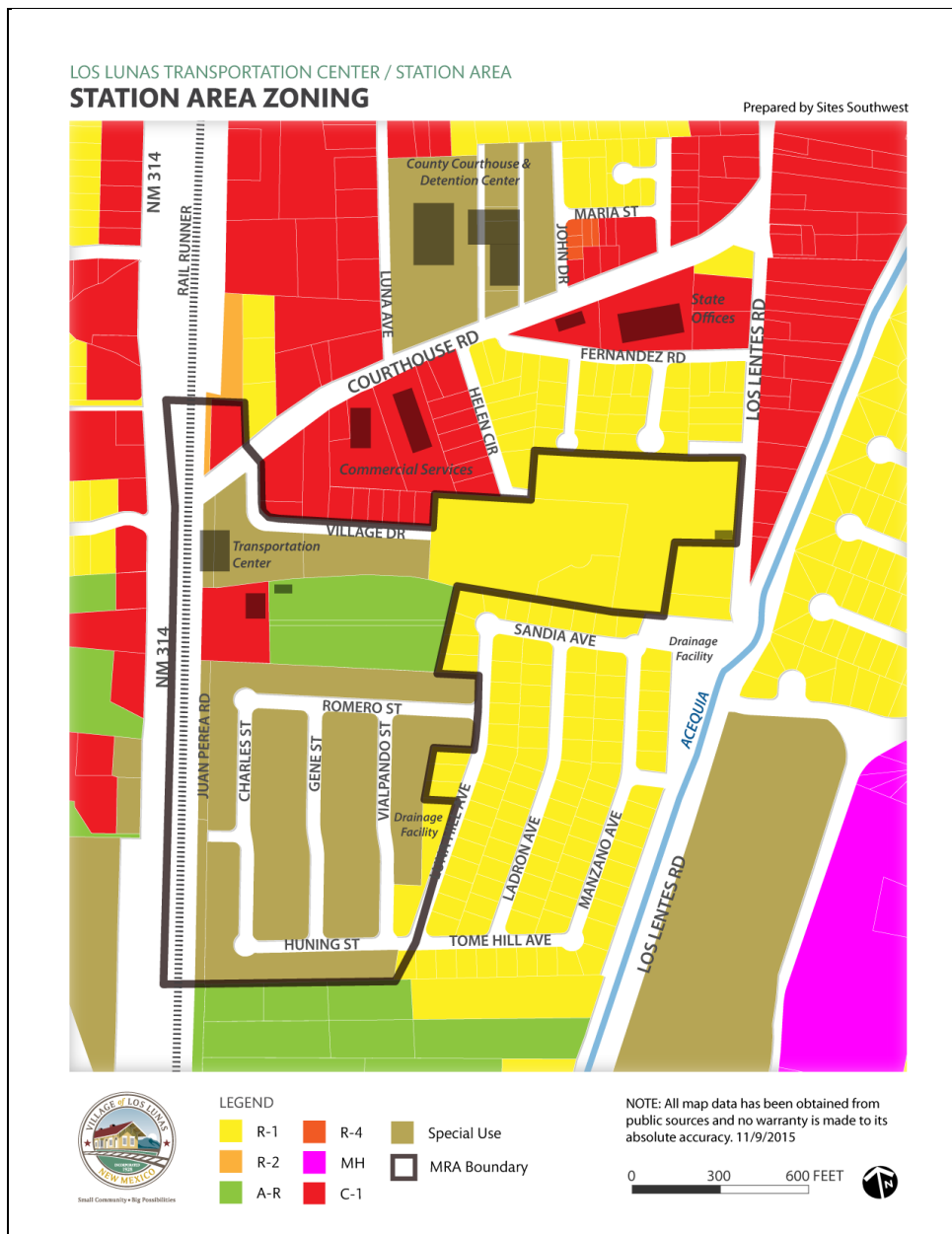
North of the Transportation Center's rear parking lot is a day care center with colorful playground equipment, a dentist office, and a number of two-story apartment buildings. The surrounding area to the east of the Study Area comprises mostly single family homes. Across the street to the west of the train station is a deteriorating restaurant building which is for sale.

## 2.3 ZONING

A large portion of the MRA Study Area is zoned Special Use for various uses, such as "public" or "mobile home park." The Village has not yet adopted the mixed use zoning (TOD-MU) or higher density residential zoning (TOD-R) for the area proposed in the Station Area Plan. These would introduce two special use zoning categories designed to promote residential densities and commercial uses supportive of transit ridership, and walking and bicycling in areas in proximity to the Transportation Center while protecting the existing scale and intensity of surrounding residential neighborhoods.

There are also two half-acre parcels along 314 zoned C-1, located approximately 10 acres to the east of the transportation hub, zoned R-1, and about four acres southeast of the Transportation Center zoned A-R (Agriculture-Residential).

**FIGURE 3 ZONING MAP**



## 2.4 BUILDING CONDITIONS

Building and parcel conditions were observed and photographed during a field visit and reference exterior appearance. Good condition indicates that the exterior of the building is in good repair without need for more than routine maintenance. Fair condition indicates some cosmetic deficiencies such as minor peeling or faded paint. Buildings were classified as being in poor condition if they showed signs of long-term neglect (major areas of peeling paint or stucco) or obvious structural problems. Most structures in the area are in fair to good condition.



**Table 2 Building and Parcel Conditions**

Parcel #/ Owner	Use/ zoning	Tenants (if any)	Structure Condition	Land Conditions	Comments
1 Private	Residential/R-2	Access easement is vacant	Good	N/A	Only access easement is in MRA boundary
2 LL	Residential/ C-1	Vacant	N/A	Dirt, vegetation	
3 VC	Railrunner Station	Train entrance, tracks	Good	Good	
4 LL	Institutional/ SU	Transportation Center/ parking	Good	Paved	
5 LL	Institutional/SU	Parking Lot	Good	Paved	Available parking midday during week
6 LL	Residential land/R-1	Vacant	Vacant	Good—grass, weeds	Lower and prone to flooding
7 LL	Residential/ R-1	Vacant	N/A	Grass and weeds	Prone to flooding
8 Private	Residential/ R-1	Vacant land/ single family house	Fair to Good	Grass, trees	Sizeable vacant frontage along Los Lentes
9 Private	Residential/C-1 & A-R	Manufactured home, gazebo, large shed/barn, vacant land in back 2/3's of lot	Good	Good –grass, weeds	Blue manufactured home well kept
10 Private	Residential/ C-1	New single-wide mobile home, cars, trailer.	Fair to Good	Packed dirt, gravel, weeds	Vacant land in front of lot; structure in back, tall chain link fence
11 Private	Residential/ A-R	Vacant land	Poor (trailer)	Good--grass, weeds	Grass and weeds
12 LL	Residential/SU	Abandoned mobile home park	Poor	Poor to Fair	Paved roadways cracking, rolled curbs, grass and weeds in sidewalk cracks, broken streetlights.
13 LL	Residential/SU	Drainage Easement	Vacant		
14 LL	Non-residential	ROW	Vacant	N/A	
15 LL	Non-residential	ROW	Vacant	N/A	

'LL= Los Lunas, VC= Valencia County,

## 2.5 ANALYSIS OF BUILDING AND SITE CONDITIONS

The analysis of building and site conditions shows that the Study Area includes properties that meet the criteria for blight set forth in the Metropolitan Redevelopment Act, including deteriorated or deteriorating structures and site improvements. Moreover, the level of commercial and residential development does not meet the Village's stated goals for transit-oriented development around the Transportation Center.

### Deteriorated or Deteriorating Structures

There are a few deteriorated or deteriorating structures in the Study Area. They include an abandoned mobile home and a trailer on parcels 11 and 9.



*Abandoned structures/vehicles sit on Parcels 11 and 9.*

### Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements

The site and other improvements are deteriorating on multiple properties in the Study Area or do not meet current standards. As noted previously, the sidewalks and streets within the former mobile home park are cracked and invaded by weeds. Utility hook-ups are damaged and some streetlights have collapsed. The site has trash and other debris. Parts of a perimeter fence are sagging or falling down.

Dirt parking lots, lack of landscaping and maintenance contribute to a poor image of other properties. Weeds and abandoned structures or vehicles are the most common problems on vacant properties.



*Light structures are destroyed and weeds and debris crack the paving and sidewalks in the former mobile home park south of the Los Lunas Transportation Center.*

## Defective or inadequate street and lot layout

The existing street layouts do not foster the development of higher density housing and commercial activities envisioned for transit-oriented development around the Transportation Center. Several large, narrow vacant properties with insufficient access are located behind existing homes, which discourages development.

Common ownership of the abandoned mobile home park provides an opportunity to replat properties into parcels of an accessible, developable size, but the current configuration would have to be demolished first.

## Obsolete or impractical planning and platting

The existing planning and platting for the former mobile home park does not lend itself to the current land uses desired by the Village of Los Lunas. The planning and platting of land into large, vacant strips fronted by houses along major streets also does not foster the redevelopment envisioned for the area surrounding the Transportation Center.

## Unsanitary or unsafe conditions

All of the Study Area is located within a FEMA-designated floodplain. Houses located in the floodplain here are either required to elevate the house four feet above the ground or pay EMA flood insurance, both of which add substantially to the cost of housing.

In addition, planning staff in the Village consider the abandoned mobile home park to be a nuisance. Thieves steal copper from the infrastructure; the on-site guard shack has been burglarized. The empty site, partially hidden by trees, a split-block wall, and overgrown weeds, attracts homeless persons and offers a sheltered location for unsavory and potentially illegal activities.

## Diversity of Ownership

Three-fifths of the parcels are in public ownership; Los Lunas owns eight for a total of 11.03 acres, and Valencia County owns one (0.29 acres), although the largest amount of acreage is in private hands. The six remaining parcels (~35 acres) are privately owned by six different owners. The largest parcel in the southern MRA study area under a single ownership is the 23-acre former mobile home park. The diversity of ownership makes it challenging to redevelop the area according to a common vision of a mixed use town center.

## 2.6 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

### Business Economic Activity

There have been low levels of commercial or residential activity or redevelopment within the Study Area despite investment by the Village and Rio Metro Regional Transit District. This is partly due to the impacts of the Great Recession as well as the subsequent tightening of banking regulations. Banks also are reluctant to loan money for development in a floodplain, and developers say the Federal tax credit program no longer covers the gap in financing for multi-family housing. The recent Valencia County/Village of Los Lunas Joint Affordable Housing Plan projects that over the next five years the Village will need a total of 168 rental units geared toward 2- to 4-person and elderly and disabled households earning 60% or less of the Area Median Income and more than 500 ownership units for households earning 80% or less of the Area Median Income.

Public-private partnerships with the Village of Los Lunas represent the most likely way redevelopment will occur in the Study Area. The Village still intends to set aside a half acre for the development of affordable housing in the area.

# 3. Findings

The findings of the study are as follows:

- The Los Lunas Transportation Center and the surrounding mostly vacant land represents the most feasible location in the Village to develop a desirable Village Center with public uses and higher density commercial and residential uses that support transit-oriented development and redevelopment.
- The west side of the MRA Study Area has developed as a Transportation Center where residents and visitors can park their cars, walk or ride bicycles to board the Rail Runner Express to Albuquerque and parts north, as well as local buses. A day care center and two-story apartment buildings have developed to the north of the back parking lot, and the Village intends to incorporate a plaza, a central park and performance venue, and retail space.
- In spite of public investments, various physical conditions have inhibited the sound and orderly development of the Village Center in this location, primarily location in a floodplain, fragmented ownership of parcels, obsolete and impractical planning and platting (including an abandoned mobile home park with obsolete infrastructure and long parcels without legal roadway access), and deterioration of some structures.
- The current condition of a large proportion of the properties is a detriment to the Village's fiscal well-being and to the ability of the Village to meet the needs of its residents.

The analysis demonstrates that the property included in the analysis exhibits a combination of factors that contribute to blight. Because current conditions within the study area inhibit sound development of the property, the redevelopment and development of the study area is necessary in the interest of the welfare of the residents of the municipality.

The powers granted to municipalities in New Mexico through the Metropolitan Redevelopment Act are intended to enable municipalities to promote economic activity in areas like the Study Area, where growth and development is hindered by physical and other conditions. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Act provides a number of tools to municipalities that help them eliminate conditions of blight in areas that are so designated, including the ability to acquire land, assist in land assembly, offer financial incentives and provide public improvements to encourage and promote industry, trade, or other economic activity.

Based on the findings of the designation report, a development/redevelopment plan should be carried out to aid in the elimination and deterrence of blight in the Study Area.